



# Midsomer Norton Schools Partnership

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## LITERACY ACROSS THE CURRICULUM POLICY

### RATIONALE

Literacy underpins all areas of the school curriculum by encouraging students to use language for learning as well as developing skills in speaking and listening, reading and writing for a wide range of purposes. If students are able to express themselves clearly, both orally and in writing, the learning is enhanced in all subjects. It is therefore the collective responsibility of all teachers and teaching assistants to support students' literacy development enabling them to write more fluently and to read with understanding. Furthermore, students should be able to talk confidently and clearly about what they have read and written.

### AIMS

The aims of this policy document are to:

- support teachers and support staff in understanding how their work contributes to the development of students' literacy skills;
- develop a shared understanding of the role of effective language and communication skills in students' learning;
- acknowledge that language plays a central role in students' sense of identity, belonging and growth;
- raise students' own expectations of achievement, confidence and engagement in literacy, thereby raising standards;
- increase knowledge and understanding of expected standards of achievement and methods of assessment in speaking and listening, writing and reading, and strategies for supporting weakness in these areas.

We recognise that Speaking and Listening, Reading and Writing, although used in the document to delineate skill sets, are interdependent.

### **Speaking and listening**

Talk is a vital tool for learning and the main mode of communication in everyday life. As such, we want our students to develop in confidence and competence in speaking and listening so that they are able to:

- clarify and express their ideas to explain their thinking;
- adapt their speech for a range of contexts including paired and group discussions and speaking to a larger audience;
- use varied and specialised vocabulary;
- speak for a range of purposes e.g. to narrate, to analyse, to explain, to reflect and evaluate;
- listen with understanding and respond sensitively and appropriately.

### **Reading**

Reading is a priority across all schools in the partnership because we understand that it is the key to success across most curriculum areas. We want to develop and maintain a culture of reading whereby reading for pleasure is the norm amongst students. All students are then able to become active readers of texts and will be supported in developing the use of reading comprehension strategies to enable them to:

- read fluently, accurately and with understanding;
- become independent and critical readers of fiction, non-fiction and media texts who can make informed and appropriate choices;
- select information from a wide range of texts and sources including print, media and ICT and to evaluate those sources.

## **Writing**

Fluent written communication is a vital means of expressing understanding and is used in all subject areas and lessons. We want students to develop their skills so that they can:

- write in a wide range of forms and for different purposes and audiences e.g. to interpret, evaluate, explain, argue, persuade analyse and explore;
- develop ideas and communicate meaning to a reader using wide-ranging and subject specific vocabulary and an effective style, organising and structuring sentences grammatically and whole texts coherently;
- present their writing clearly using accurate punctuation, correct spelling and legible handwriting;
- apply word processing conventions and understand the principles of authoring multi-media text.

## **IMPLEMENTATION**

Successful implementation of this policy is dependent upon the extent to which we:

- take account of the needs of all students, understanding the role that age, ethnicity, gender and socioeconomic background might play in their literacy and valuing all language achievements;
- structure lessons to support and stimulate the developments in literacy skills;
- understand how to organise and use resources to support this teaching;
- monitor and evaluate the impact of the literacy support that takes place, in order to identify and share best practice and refine common goals.

## **Speaking and listening**

In our teaching we will provide planned opportunities across the curriculum for students to engage in purposeful talk, both formally and informally.

In planning for talk we must consider pace and timing so that purposeful talk is maintained.

We will give students regular opportunities to speak and listen in the following contexts:

- in pairs with a working partner;
- in small groups with opportunities to take on the roles of chair or scribe;
- with the teacher or another adult;
- in whole class discussions;
- presentations to a wider audience;

In these contexts some of the following activities should take place:

- exploring and describing events, activities and problems, exploring and developing ideas with others;
- reporting back to a wider audience in order to consolidate ideas and understanding;
- asking questions as well as answering them;
- speculating, hypothesising and imagining;
- planning, organising and reviewing activities;
- investigating and solving problems collaboratively;
- evaluating experiences and reflecting on learning;
- talking at length and adopting the 'expert' role.

## **Reading**

- We will use available data on students' reading levels, including Accelerated Reader data, in order to make informed choices about the texts we use in lessons and to plan appropriate support for students in order that they may successfully access texts.
- We will take opportunities to demonstrate pleasure in reading by organising reading events with authors and tutors will model reading by joining tutees in reading wherever possible;
- We will make opportunities both in lessons and in tutorial times for students to read;
- We will provide planned opportunities across the curriculum for students to:
  - read and follow written instructions;
  - read and engage with narratives of events or activities;
  - follow up their interests and read texts of varying lengths;
  - question and challenge printed information and views;
  - read with understanding descriptions of processes, structures and mechanisms;
  - read and explore ideas and theories;
  - learn how to sift and select, and take notes from text and read to locate and relocate information;
  - learn how to scan for overall meaning and scan for key points, words and phrases;
  - use reading to research and investigate from printed words and moving images in texts.

## **Writing**

- We should draw attention to the purpose, audience and form of each piece of writing, making use of the literacy specific displays and resources (e.g. Editing Wall) in each classroom so that this becomes a regular occurrence. Whilst the audience for students' writing is often teacher and peer group, students should be encouraged to write for a range of intended readers, including 'real' audiences wherever possible (for example, by asking students to write for a national competition or to email their Member of Parliament).
- We will help students to appreciate the differences between standard English and non-standard forms of the language and to recognise the appropriate register for their written responses.
- We will provide planned opportunities across the curriculum for students to:
  - make notes from a variety of sources - printed word, moving images and ICT texts;
  - use writing to plan, organise and record;
  - write logs and journals in order to clarify thoughts and develop new understanding;
  - plan, draft, discuss and reflect on their writing;
  - learn the conventions of different forms of writing in different subject areas e.g. by using writing frames and providing clear models for writing;
  - write at appropriate length (which may, on occasions, include writing briefly);
  - write collaboratively with other students;
  - present some writing for display or publication.

We will:

- expect high standard of presentation in most of students' finished writing;
- provide good models of particular kinds of writing;
- provide dictionaries, glossaries and lists of appropriate subject vocabulary and encourage students to use them;
- help students to use a range of strategies to learn spellings, including:
  - look – say – cover – write – check;
  - making connections between words with the same visual spelling pattern;
  - exploring families of words.

## **Resources**

We will aim to provide:

- displays of reading material relevant to the topic or national curriculum subject and of relevant vocabulary;
- dictionaries and thesauruses to all faculties who require them;
- relevant material at appropriate levels of interest and difficulty and from a range of text types;
- reading material of high quality which is up to date, relevant, and balanced in its presentation of ethnicity, culture and gender;
- some texts in the first languages of pupils acquiring English as an additional language;
- bi-lingual dictionaries to support students for whom English is an additional language;
- access to school and public libraries and to ICT sources of information;
- access to appropriate audio visual equipment;
- a classroom environment which is conducive to good literacy practice, including the 'Editing Wall' in English and Humanities classrooms to encourage independent proofreading as standard practice;
- varied book/magazine boxes for Y9/10 tutor groups that will enhance their independent reading of fiction and non-fiction, both curricular and extra-curricular.

## **ASSESSING LITERACY ACROSS THE CURRICULUM**

- When assessing students' work across the curriculum we will value their oral contributions and listening skills alongside their reading and writing.
- We should take into account students' performance in speaking and listening, reading and writing when assessing and reporting on students' progress in subject areas.
- When setting writing tasks we will make explicit to the students the key features of language which will be considered.

## **When responding to students' work we should:**

- make comments which are positive and supportive and in line with the Literacy Marking Code (LMC);
- target specific areas for improvement (a selective and focussed identification of errors);
- give guidance on how to achieve the short-term targets set. For example, whilst "improve your spelling" is unhelpful and vague, the identification of a particular spelling error e.g. doubling of letters before adding -ing is specific and presents the student with a target which can be addressed;
- give priority to content, ideas, organisation, meaning and presentation (e.g. the underlining of titles/dates etc.);
- create opportunities for students to reflect on the quality of their own work and for peer assessment;

- use the LMC to support students in self-correcting their own work, including following the guidance for marking the work of students with SEND.

### **Monitoring**

All staff are responsible for literacy within their subject area. In addition, teachers and tutors are responsible for ensuring quality reading time at the specified times. (e.g DEAR time). English teachers are responsible for monitoring students' participation in Accelerated Reader; English teachers are accountable to the Literacy Coordinator who coordinates Accelerated Reader. Tutors should encourage students to take quizzes regularly, using the Accelerated Reader Student Reps to monitor the tutor group's reading progress.

The implementation of the policy will be monitored by the Literacy coordinator and SLT. The Literacy coordinator is accountable to SLT and the Governors.

### **Support for staff**

The school should provide guidance for subject teachers and create regular training opportunities linked to Appraisal. This should be subject-specific wherever possible. Heads of Departments (or specific literacy member of staff) will feedback any concerns to the Literacy Coordinator.

Annual feedback to staff on literacy progress should occur identifying changing foci. Year one will be reading.